



Expressions of Interest: Supported Melbourne Fringe season at the Bluestone Church Arts Space

Do you need a venue for your Fringe show? If you live in Melbourne's West, Maribyrnong Arts and Culture is offering **in-kind venue hire and technical support** at the Bluestone Church Arts Space to independently produced shows by local artists for the 2026 Melbourne Fringe Festival.

What Maribyrnong Arts and Culture will provide:

- In-kind (free) use of the Bluestone Church Arts Space for up to 6 performance days with a maximum of 2 performances per day. Longer seasons that allow for word-of-mouth publicity to grow are encouraged.
- A stipend of \$1,000 to assist artists in covering production or artistic costs for their performance.
- A dedicated Venue Manager, who will be the point of contact for selected artists, and a Front of House supervisor, who runs the box office and bar. Artists may be required to provide a team member to assist with front-of-house on busy performances.
- A dedicated Venue Technician to assist in providing sound, lighting and audio-visual operations during your performance. Please note: bump-in and out is the responsibility of the Selected Artist, as is providing your own Stage Manager.
- Access to the venue's technical equipment comprising basic lighting and sound setup, portable theatre drape system, staging and access to a projector. Any additional technical requirements beyond the venue's provision will need to be sourced by the Selected Artist.
- Marketing support through Council channels, including:
 - Art Bytes eNews (~1000 subscribers)
 - Arts and Culture Instagram (~3,300 followers)
 - Arts and Culture Facebook (~3,000 followers)
 - Arts and Culture website
 - Inclusion in Melbourne Fringe and Westside promotions

While Council will provide some marketing support for the Bluestone Church Arts Space Melbourne Fringe Season, the Selected Artist will need to actively pursue their own marketing campaign to attract audiences.



- Artists will keep 100% of box office income, less any booking fees Melbourne Fringe Festival may charge.
- Maribyrnong City Council reserves the exclusive right to operate a bar during Melbourne Fringe. Artists will not receive a cut or percentage of the bar sales.

Key Dates

Bluestone Church Arts Space EOIs open	Monday 6 April 2026
Melbourne Fringe event registrations open	Thursday 16 April 2026
Bluestone Church Arts Space EOIs close	11.59pm, Sunday 3 May 2026
Applicants Notified	Monday 11 May 2026
Melbourne Fringe Registrations close	Friday 22 May 2026
Melbourne Fringe program launches	August 2026
Melbourne Fringe Festival	Tuesday 29 September – Sunday 18 October 2026.

About the Bluestone Church Arts Space

The Bluestone Church Arts Space is a flexible performance space located at 8A Hyde Street, Footscray (beside Footscray Town Hall). Managed by the Maribyrnong Arts and Culture team, the Bluestone Church Arts Space hosts a range of residencies, events and performances for and by the local arts community throughout the year.

Offering an open plan, flat wooden floor space and exceptionally high ceilings, the Church offers a performance area of approximately 120m², and can accommodate 80 seated audience members. The venue includes a small kitchenette and bar, and is suitable for small-scale performances including comedy, cabaret, live music, dance, theatre or similar.

About Melbourne Fringe Festival

The annual Melbourne Fringe Festival is Open Access – meaning all applications are accepted and anyone with something to say can put on a show. Every year the program features 450+ events by Melbourne’s most interesting (and independent) artists and community members across every possible artform imaginable. Through broadcasts and live streams, interactive virtual experiences and digital art, physically distant or in-theatre experiences...big names stand-by-side with emerging artists and everyday citizens with creative bones and a bright idea.



Melbourne Fringe
at the Bluestone Church Arts Space

Maribyrnong CITY COUNCIL | Arts & Culture | MELBOURNE FRINGE

The banner features a yellow background with two circular images: the left one shows the exterior of the Bluestone Church, and the right one shows the interior of the church's arts space. Logos for Maribyrnong City Council, Arts & Culture, and Melbourne Fringe are positioned at the bottom right.

All selected artists will need to complete the registration process with Melbourne Fringe Festival. More information is available on Melbourne Fringe's website.



Accessibility

The Bluestone Church Arts Space is a wheelchair accessible venue with an accessible bathroom. Accessible entry to the building is via the door located next to the Footscray Town Hall carpark. The main double doors where the box office is located are not accessible due to a set of five heritage-listed bluestone steps. Within the venue, it operates all on one level – there are no stairs, steps or lifts within the building.

General parking is available directly behind the venue. There is also a designated wheelchair accessible parking space in this parking lot. Footscray station is located 500m from the Bluestone Church Arts Space and has ramps and elevators as well as accessible toilets. A full guide to accessibility in the venue is available at our website by searching for Bluestone Church Arts Space.

Your Responsibilities

- Providing all creative and production requirements for a high-quality theatre or live music performance at the agreed times and dates in the Bluestone Church Arts Space, including stage management for your performance.
- Paying a refundable \$200 security deposit for the Bluestone Church Arts Space, though no hire fees will be charged. The security deposit will be refunded following the season, and will be retained by Council if damage is incurred.
- Providing a certificate for Public Liability Insurance to the value of no less than \$10 million.
- Agreeing to the Bluestone Church Arts Space Terms and Conditions of Use.
- All Melbourne Fringe registration procedures and fees. However, if the registration fees are a barrier to your participation, please do get in touch as we may be able to assist.
- Ticketing, including complying with Melbourne Fringe Festival requirements. MCC may require up to 5 x complimentary tickets per season.
- Supplementary production staff required in surplus to Maribyrnong City Council's provided Technician. This includes a Stage Manager, and any additional Technical Operators that may be required (such as projection).
- Additional Front of House person to assist the designated Venue Manager.
- Supplying high resolution images and performance information to Maribyrnong City Council, in order to promote your show. In addition, artists/shows are expected to promote their own shows and manage their own specific publicity campaigns and will be asked to share details of these promotional plans in their Expression of Interest application.



- Referring to the facility by its full name, being the Bluestone Church Arts Space, and including the Maribyrnong City Council Arts & Festival City logos on all promotional and other public materials produced. Any public materials featuring these logos must be approved by Maribyrnong City Council prior to use.

Selection Criteria

- Artists who live, work, study in, or have a strong connection to the Maribyrnong City Council area will be prioritised. Artists from neighbouring municipalities in the Western suburbs will also be looked upon favourably.
- Artists must be independent practitioners with the demonstrated skills and relationships to successfully undertake the proposed project. The proposed project should be clearly articulated and demonstrate a presentation-ready work for Melbourne Fringe
- Demonstration of a marketing plan for this production.

How to Apply

Complete the online form **by 11.59pm, Sunday 3 May 2026**. If you have any other questions, or you would like to apply in a different format that meets your access requirements, please contact Maribyrnong Arts & Culture via phone **(03) 9688 0200** or email arts@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au.

